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ALNWICK URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR ENDED 1954.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit the Annual Report for 1954 which is a short one on lines similar to that of previous years Dr. B. W. E. Trevor-Roper was Medical Officer during the first part of the year and I accepted the appointment on a temporary basis, commencing October, 1954. I am indebted to Dr. Trevor-Roper for information relating to his period of office.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

The Area of the District remains unchanged at 4,778 acres.

The number of inhabited houses is 2,389.

The number of new houses completed during the year was 20 and of these 12 were built with state assistance.

The Rateable Value is £46,199 and the sum represented by a penny rate is £186.

The Estimated (mid-year) population is 7,450 this is the figure taken when calculating the Vital Statistics.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births.

The number of births, corrected for inward and outward transfers is 130 of which 69 were males and 61 females. Of this number two were still births and five illegitimate.

Birth rate 1954 - 17.4 per thousand per annum.

" " 1953 - 23.0 " " " "

" " 1952 - 18.3 " " " "

The Birth Rate for England and Wales 1954 - 15.2 per thousand per annum.

Deaths.

The number of deaths, corrected for inward and outward transfers is 94 of which 49 were males and 45 females.

Death Rate 1954 - 12.6 per thousand per annum.

" " 1953 - 11.37 " " " "

" " 1952 - 10.56 " " " "

The Death rate for England & Wales 1954 11.3 per thousand per annum.

Infantile Deaths.

The number of deaths in infants under one year of age was nil.

The Infantile Death Rate 1954 - nil.

" " " " 1953 - 24.3 per thousand live births.

" " " " 1952 - 15.1 " " " "

The Infantile Death Rate for England and Wales 1954 25.0 per thousand live births.

CAUSES OF DEATH AT ALL AGES.

Tuberculosis respiratory	2. Other circulatory disease	5.
Malignant neoplasm stomach	1. Influenza	3.
Malignant neoplasm lung, bronchus	3. Pneumonia	4.
Malignant neoplasm breast	2. Bronchitis	7.
Malignant neoplasm uterus	1. Other diseases of respiratory system	1.
Other malignant & lymphatic neoplasms	4. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1.
Vascular lesions of nervous system	Nephritis and nephrosis	1.
Coronary disease, angina	21. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	10.
Hypertension with heart disease	3. All other accidents	3.
Other heart disease.	9.	

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The number of cases of Infectious Diseases notified to me during the year was 22.

Scarlet Fever	3.	Acute Poliomyelitis	3.
Measles	7.	Dysentery	1.
Tuberculosis	8.		

LOCAL HEALTH SERVICES.

Consulting Physicians, Surgeons, Gynaecologists and Radiologists visit regularly at Alnwick Infirmary where Ante-natal and Orthopaedic Clinics are also held. There are child welfare and dental clinics in the Town. The Hospitals in the Urban District consist of the Infirmary and the Hillcrest Maternity Home.

WATER SUPPLY.

Water was pumped throughout the year from the Rugley Borehole and good bacteriological results were obtained from the several samples taken of the three main sources of supply. There are still a number of houses without an internal water supply, but the majority of these are scheduled to be dealt with in the five year slum clearance programme.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

All new drainage is inspected and water tested before back filling. Blockages to private house drains are cleared by the local authority and a charge made on the occupier. It is to be regretted that no further progress has been made with the proposed new sewage works and the delay is causing pollution of the River Aln. A further possible danger to public health is caused by bathers who bathe near the outfall.

DISINFESTATION.

The number of houses treated for vermin continues to decline but this does not allow for any complacency. I would advise that all houses where tenants are selected for new council houses, be inspected, so that any necessary treatment can be given before removal, and thus avoid new houses from becoming infested. The number of complaints of rats and mice increased over the year. The affected areas were in the older parts of the town, where control is made difficult because of disused and dilapidated property. The 'twice yearly' treatment of sewers was carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and no new areas of infestation were found.

MILK AND ICE CREAM.

Since the opening of the Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd: Milk Depot, for the handling and pasteurising of milk the number of shops retailing milk has declined. The bulk of the milk consumed is retailed by 7 suppliers, 3 of whom are Dairy Farmers.

<u>Milk sold by</u>	<u>Designation of milk.</u>	
Dairy Farmers (3)	Raw - undesignated	2.
	Designated T.T.	1.
Others i.e. Distributors (4)	Pasteurised	3.
	Sterilised	2.
	Designated T.T.	1.

All pasteurised and sterilised milk is obtained from the Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd. Milk Depot where frequent samples were taken for the methylene blue, phosphatase, and turbidity tests. All samples were satisfactory. There are 24 shops where pre-wrapped Ice Cream is sold, and 2 ice cream manufacturers.

All such premises are registered under section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act 1938 and inspected periodically.

FOOD PREMISES.

There are 106 food premises in the district comprising the following trades:-

Public Houses and Hotels	21. Fried Fish and Chips	4.
Off Beer establishments	2. Chemists	4.
General Dealers	17. Ice Cream Manufacturers	2.
Grocers	15. Egg Packing Stations	2.
Butchers	12. Poultry Dealers	1.
Cafes and Snack Bars	9. Breweries	1.
Fruiterers	9. Fishmongers	1.
Bakers and Confectioners	5. Mineral Water Manufacturers	1.

Special attention was directed to cafes, snack bars, and butchers shops as the type of food sold is susceptible to food poisoning organisms. Although gradual improvements are being made there are still too many of these premises without a constant supply of hot water and wash hand basins for personal hand washing. It is essential that all such premises should have facilities for personal cleanliness of staff employed, with adequate supplies of hot water, soap or detergents, towels and nail brushes. There were no outbreaks of food poisoning in the district. Several visits were made to shops to inspect food. All condemned food was voluntarily surrendered and disposed of at the controlled tip.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES.

When meat became de-controlled the local authority took over control of the Public Slaughterhouse from the Ministry of Food. Alterations were carried out to make separate slaughtering bays for the use of the local butchers, and these were let on a yearly rental. All local butchers who desired to use the slaughterhouse were provided with accommodation. There are no private slaughterhouses in the district. In October an additional Sanitary Inspector was engaged and from that time all carcasses were inspected by the sanitary department. The services of the part-time Veterinary Officer, employed for meat inspection, were dispensed with. Two of the butchers deal in wholesale trade and much of the inspectors time was spent on inspection of carcasses which were consigned outside the district. To ensure one hundred per cent inspection of all carcasses it entailed night and Sunday work.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your Obedient Servant,

Ronald Keenlyside.

Medical Officer of Health.

